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Steve Komar
Calvary Cemetery
2324 East Main St.
Waterbury Ct. 06705

2-03-2009

House Bill # 5138

Good afternoon ladies and gentleman, I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Steve Komar. I am the Manager of Calvary, New St. Joseph, and Old St. Joseph Cemetery in Waterbury, along with St. James and St. Francis Cemetery in Naugatuck. All are under the direction, of the Catholic Cemeteries Association of Hartford. Based on my almost 15 years of experience as a cemetery manager, I would like to make a few statements of fact, and ask a few pertinent questions of this representative body. The answers to these questions, in my opinion must be reviewed before any pronouncement can be made in regards to House Bill # 5138.

Facts:

1. All American flags are not created equal. Some flags are plastic, nylon, cotton, or a combined material, which greatly effects the time a flag, will hold up against the elements.
2. Flags placed by organizations are generally not placed in flag holders, but placed directly in the ground. Flags placed only a few inches in the ground will have a tendency to fall over in a rain or windstorm.
3. Organizations that now place flags, only do so once or twice a year, but do not maintain them. It falls to the individual cemetery to remove fallen or disrespectful flags, during the rest of the year.
4. Current Ct. law prevents the removal of flags and flag holders from the cemetery. A flag placed by an organization, is virtually indistinguishable from a flag placed by a veterans family member.

Questions:

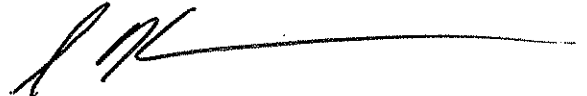
1. The purposed bill would allow the placement of flags on graves of veterans from Seven (7) days prior to Memorial Day until the Monday after July 4th.
2. Who will maintain them during this period, and what is to happen to them after July 4th?
3. If these flags are to be picked up, who is responsible to do so, and how will they be able to tell a flag placed by an organization, from one placed by a family member? To pick up private flags would cause a negative response to cemetery and state offices.
4. To leave 1,000's of flags on these graves, would create a hardship, and make it almost impossible for the cemetery to give the veterans graves and surrounding area the proper care and respect that they deserve.
5. How do you propose that we complete this task?

Proposed Solution:

In April of 1963, due to the increasing number of graves that needed to be decorated, nine (9) veterans' organizations voted an accepted, to follow in the footsteps of Arlington National Cemetery. The vote allowed, that in lieu of flags and flowers a memorial and flagpole would be placed in Catholic Cemeteries to honor veterans year round. At this time Catholic Cemeteries has many memorials, with flagpoles through the association. We believe it would be best if veteran's organizations, meet with individual cemeteries in regards to placing a permanent memorial and flagpole, within the cemetery to honor veterans, as Catholic Cemeteries has done. As the cost of a single flag is around \$ 2.79 each, and will not weather very long. These funds could be placed towards a permanent monument.

In Conclusion:

Current Conn. law more than covers the right to have families place markers, flags and flag holders on graves of their loved ones, of which they do on a daily basis. This right is not even afforded to family members, with loved ones interred in Arlington National Cemetery, our most prestigious veterans cemetery, where flags are allowed for Memorial Day only, and then are removed. By utilizing the above method to honor our veterans. Organizations would not incur the cost of purchasing individuals flags for our veterans. It would also relieve the maintenance hardship, which would be placed on all cemeteries, if thousands of flags were to be placed on all veterans' graves.



Steve Komar

Reference:

1. Arlington National Cemetery .org
2. Waterbury Republican Newspaper
Tuesday April 2, 1963
Local and Northwest Edition

Vets Accept Memorial For Cemeteries

The Veterans Council voted last night at a meeting held in the Circuit Court room, to eliminate the decorating of each grave of a veteran on Veterans' Day.

This will be done because of the increasing number of graves that must be decorated, said officials.

It is the policy used at Arlington, Va., said veterans officials. Representatives from nine organizations attended the meeting.

It was voted to accept the Veteran's Memorial to be erected in Catholic cemeteries. The memorials will consist of a 10 foot square plot, the base of which will be granite stone. Also a 20-foot flagpole will be erected at each cemetery.

Stones will be erected at a later date, officials said.

The Protestant and Jewish cemeteries will be decorated with flowers and flags this year while the Catholic Cemeteries will carry on Memorial services at each of their cemeteries.

About the middle of May, seed catalogues are replaced by road maps.

Land don't oversow

Newest Casey Heir Welcomed By Board

The youngest member of the Garrett Casey family was welcomed into the world formally and officially by the Board of Aldermen last night. Majority Leader Peter Marcuse noted that Alderman Casey, who was presiding officer at the meeting, now has sufficient boys to constitute a majority of the Board of Aldermen.

The alderman and his wife were congratulated on the recent birth of their eighth son.

Man Who Threw Rock Fined \$20

A fine of \$20 was imposed yesterday in Circuit Court against Joseph Stoffi, 25, 41 Grandview Ave., who pleaded guilty to a charge of destruction of private property.

Judge George Wise was told by Pros. Raymond J. Quinn that Stoffi admitted hurling a rock through the window of a package store at 1000 Wolcott Rd.

Payments of \$15 each were made by two defendants to the Violations Bureau. Both charged with destruction of property, they were Albinis Zelvis, 39, 570 Wilson St., and John K. Upton, 56, 194 Buckingham St., Oakville. William Velez, 23, 45 East Clay St., charged with fraudulently obtaining a motor vehicle from April 3 through April 18, 1962, entered a plea of guilty. He was sentenced to 30 days in State Jail, probation suspended for six months.

Continuances granted: To tomorrow, Edward LaFrance, 16, 68 Bersalab Ave., breach of peace; Anthony Tommasini, 42, Elmrose Hotel, evading arrest; April 9, Anthony Pinho, 17, 375 High St., Naugatuck, disregarding stop sign; April 12, Lloyd Scott, 19, 73 Harris St., assault with a dangerous weapon; April 14, William Fugli, 23, 21 Edward St., breach of peace; April 16, Harry Dowling, 33, 14 Hickory St., breach of peace, destroy property; Antonio Gregorio, 35, Sunset Ave., Oakville, breach of peace; John A. Greben, 25, 109 Hinchest Ave., Oakville, breach of peace; April 17, Victor Alkhuwaj, 42, 804 East Main St., reckless driving; Gary A. Wagner, 16, 82 Lockport Ave., breaching entrance to a building, using a motor vehicle without the owner's permission; William Robb, 25, 2500 St., charged with fraudulently obtaining welfare aid, pleaded guilty during the early session and was sentenced to 30 days in the New Haven State Jail, probation suspended. A plea of guilty on probation for breach of peace, Butler's judge who said he was making a judgment of the case.

Other resignations are effective. Two teachers were hired, two contractual employees resigned, three others were hired and two more were appointed. Appointments were made by the School Board last night.

Resigning were Mrs. Helen M. Anderson, Russell A. Mazze, and Mrs. J. J. Strangar and Mrs. Maria C. Stolis, teacher at Webster School, Grade One. Named Regular Teacher Edward McDonald, previously a special educator, was named to a full-time position at Webster School. In September, Mrs. McDonald will be teaching at Webster School as the principal.

If Primary Occurs, Keep It Constructive: Zollo

Possibility of a Republican primary contest in the November mayorality nomination was discussed by Alderman Larry Zollo, former Republican town chairman, in a talk before the Big R. Women's Republican Club last night at Republican headquarters.

While there was no mention of specific candidates in Zollo's remarks prepared for delivery at the non-public meeting, they were apparently based on interest of a number of prominent Republicans in the mayorality nomination.

"Should there be more than one bona fide candidate for a nomination in August," said Zollo, "the only way you can find out which is the strongest is to test them on the Town Committee vote. While a primary contest would weaken our Republican enterprise, it is possible that a primary contest can be kept on a constructive basis if opponents for the party's nomination direct their fire against the program of the prospective nominee of the other party, instead of against each other."

The challenge confronting the party in November, said Zollo, is to make sure that at other time in our local party history—the results of which will shape the future of Republicanism in Waterbury for many years to come. In essence, the Republican Party of Waterbury will be facing the light of its life as the challenge ahead is clearly the question of whether we are to maintain a strong two-party system in our community.

Readjustment Need
Zollo declared that one of the most difficult aspects of the

Girl Scout Leaders Will Attend Parley

Two local leaders of the Blue Trail Council of Girl Scouts will attend the New England Regional President's Meeting tomorrow and Thursday in Vixen Hotel and Motor Inn, New

They are: Mrs. Thomas H. Platt, president and Miss Susan A. Hermann, executive director. Purpose of the meeting is to explore new and improved services to girls through Scout activities and to intensify current services through sharing experiences.

Liquor Outlet Curbs Plan Is Denounced

A protest against the adoption of a regulation banning the opening of taverns or restaurants with liquor licenses within 1,500 feet of similar existing businesses was sent to last night's meeting of the Board of Aldermen by William B. Pape, publisher of The Republican and The American

In his letter, Pape expressed regret he was unable to attend a recent public hearing on the proposal sponsored by the Greater Waterbury Full Liquor

challenge facing the party is complete readjustment of our party organization on the district level as a result of the Civil Service Charter amendment which restricts political participation of city workers of both parties.

The former town chairman pointed out, "No longer can we be dependent upon former campaign techniques, and no longer can we depend upon former ready-made work forces. It is important that we recognize the weakness that has been created within our party as a result of Civil Service and adjust to it quickly."

"While it is true," continued the speaker, "that the opposition party faces the same inherent weakness, it is a recognized fact that the 'ins' have a certain built-in advantage over the 'outs' that must be compensated for."

Zollo said "While there is talk of possible primary action following our August nominations for candidates for public office in the November mayorality election, we can safely assume that until that event, a certain degree of unity has been achieved in our party. To discuss the future of Republicanism for

his said. "Perhaps the most encouraging factor of the future of Republicanism is that of the assistance of the State Central Committee willing to offer aid in the form of a state organization is now more aware than ever of the local victory in a major community such as Waterbury is an absolute must if a state Republican victory is to be

Vets Will Omit Grave Decorations

The decorating of each grave on Veterans' Day will be eliminated in the future, according to the Veterans Council at a meeting held last night in the city courtroom.

This will be done because of the increasing number of graves that must be decorated, said veterans.

It is the policy used at Arlington, Va., said veterans officials. Representatives from nine organizations attended the meeting.

It was noted to accept the Veteran's Memorial to be located in public cemeteries. The memorials will consist of a 10 foot square plot, the base of which will be granite stone. Also a 3 foot flag pole will be erected at each cemetery. Stones will be erected at a later date, officials said.

The Protestant and Catholic cemeteries will be decorated with flowers and flags this year while the Catholic Cemetery will carry on memorial services at each of their cemeteries.

Palsy Unit



Chairman of the Board of Directors, Maurice Liston, president; Miles F. Alvord, vice-president; and Donald J. Post, secretary.

Two Veteran Teachers To Retire

The Board of Education last night accepted the resignation of two veteran teachers, one of whom is a member of the Board of Education.

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Architects Hired For 3 School Jobs

The Board of Education Pres. Kenneth J. Carter announced last night that three architects, including one of proposed new elementary schools, have been hired for the new elementary school in the Bucks Hill section, and the Alexander and Nicholas firm for the auditorium and gymnasium addition to East Farnham School.

The architects and their jobs are: Louis Pardo for the new elementary school in the Bucks Hill section, and the Alexander and Nicholas firm for the auditorium and gymnasium addition to East Farnham School.

CEREMONIES



"FLAGS-IN"

Each year for the past 40 years, the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) has honored America's fallen heroes by placing American flags before the gravestones and niches of service members buried at both Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Soldier's and Airmen's Home National Cemetery just prior to Memorial Day weekend.

This tradition, known as "flags in," has been conducted annually since The Old Guard was designated as the Army's official ceremonial unit in 1948. Every available soldier in the 3rd U.S. Infantry participates, placing small American flags one foot in front and centered before each grave marker.

During an approximately three-hour period, the soldiers place flags in front of more than 260,000 gravestones and about 7,300 niches at the cemetery's columbarium. Another 13,500 flags are placed at the Soldier's and Airmen's Cemetery. As part of this yearly memorial activity, Old Guard soldiers remain in the cemetery throughout the weekend, ensuring that a flag remains at each gravestone.

American flags are also placed at the graves of each of the four unknown service men interred at the Tomb of the Unknowns, by the Tomb Sentinels. All flags are removed after Memorial Day before each cemetery is opened to the public.



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A GUIDE TO BURIAL AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

AFTER THE TIME OF NEED

Locating a Gravesite or Niche

To locate the gravesite or niche in the Columbarium of a relative or friend, you may telephone or visit the custom service desk in the Visitors' Center. The telephone number is (703) 607-8000. Except for Christmas Day, the Vis Center is open every day of the year. The hours open to the public are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., April 1 through September 30 and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., October 1 through March 31.

Gravesite Maintenance after Interment

Graves are filled and leveled after each interment. As the soil compacts in the grave, sinkage may occur especially during the first year after the interment. Graves are sodded in the Spring or in the Fall (generally during the month March through May and September through November).

Vehicle Passes for Gravesite Visitation

Permanent Pass — A permanent pass is issued to the next-of-kin at the time of the interment. Additional permanent passes are available for the parents and children of the deceased. An application for a permanent pass is available at the Administration Building or you may write for an application to: Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery, ATTN: ANNC-ADI, Arlington, VA 22211.

Temporary Pass — A temporary pass may be issued to family and friends of the deceased. You may request a temporary pass upon your visit to Arlington National Cemetery. The pass is good for one visit only but additional passes may be requested upon each visit. To request a pass you should go to the Customer Service Desk located in the Visitors' Center. The staff will issue you a temporary pass and will provide you with the grave location and a map to the gravesite. To access the Visitors' Center, you should park in the pay parking facility. Take your parking stub/ticket with you to the Customer Service Desk. The staff will validate your stub/ticket if you make the request within 1/2 hour of the time stamped on the stub/ticket.

Floral Tributes at Gravesites

Fresh cut flowers may be placed on graves at any time.

Artificial flowers may be placed on graves October 10th through April 15th.

Planting of flowers, shrubs, etc. is prohibited.

Potted plants are permitted during the period 10 days before and 10 days after Easter.

Christmas wreaths are permitted during the Christmas season.

Floral items will be removed from the graves as soon as they become faded and unsightly.



Statues, vigil lights, flags, etc. and any type of commemorative items are not permitted on graves except for flags placed on the graves by the government.